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RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ASTANA 9485
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 3911
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 3776
RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 1910
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE 0098
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C O N F I D E N T I A L TASHKENT 001699

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SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON ALISHER ANVAROVICH
KURMANOV, UZBEK AMBASSADOR TO SINGAPORE.

Classified By: STEVEN PROHASKA AND BRIANA OLSEN FOR REASONS 1.4 (B, D).

11. (U) Summary: On August 25, 2007, the Senate of the Republic of Uzbekistan appointed Alisher Anvarovich Kurmanov as the country's first Ambassador to Singapore. Post has obtained biographical information on Kurmanov.

12. (C) Alisher Anvarovich Kurmanov, an ethnic Tatar (officially Uzbek), was born in 1965 in Tashkent, according to an Embassy contact. He told the Ambassador that he was born in Kabul, however, when his father, a Soviet diplomat, was posted there. He graduated from the Department of Arabic Philology in the Faculty of Oriental Studies at Tashkent State University in 1987. After graduation he served as a junior staff member in several government agencies and as an interpreter in Soviet organizations and missions abroad. In September Kurmanov indicated to the Ambassador that he had served as a soldier in Afghanistan and had also served in the United States.

13. (U) Between 1992 and 2000, he served as Chief of the accreditation section and Chief of the protocol department in the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations. From 2000 to 2003, he served as Commercial Officer at the Uzbek Embassy in London. From 2003 to 2007, he served as the Chief of the State Protocol Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan. On August 25, 2007, the Senate of Uzbekistan's Oliy Majlis appointed him as Ambassador to Singapore.

14. (C) Comment: Kurmanov appears to have been selected as Ambassador to Singapore for two main reasons. First, he is an economist. The Uzbeks are still in the initial stages of attracting Singaporean investment and credit lines. During Karimov's trip to Singapore in January 2007, several memoranda of understanding were signed; these serve as a platform for further cooperation. Karimov is impressed with Singapore's rapid development and would like the same to occur in Uzbekistan. Specifically, he wants to attract investment in the hi-tech and energy sectors. In February 2007, the Singaporean Overseas Chinese Bank Corporation extended a credit line for trade of 50 million USD to the National Bank of Uzbekistan. The GOU is reportedly considering putting more of its assets in Singapore banks. Second, Kurmanov is not an independent thinker and probably will implement the orders of his superiors without question.

As MFA's Chief of Protocol, Kurmanov was as cooperative with the Embassy as his political bosses would allow.
NORLAND